

The Full Power of the Dark Side

"Now You Will Experience the Full Power of the Dark Side!"

In his monumental compendium of dark side lore, the *Book of Anger*, Emperor Palpatine describes the origin of force storms:

"I have learned that *Anger* and *Will* joined together, are the greatest Power.

"I have learned to meditate Anger and Will with clarity and precision, and I have learned to open the hidden reservoirs of dark side power.

"Anger concentrated by Will in the vital center of the body, creates a portal through which vast energies are released -- the energies of the dark side of the Force.

"Standing watch with the mind, in my meditation of Anger, I have slain my enemies from great distances, through the dark side power that permeates the galaxy. I have created lightning, and unleashed its destructive fire.

"Using this knowledge, I can unleash the dark side energies that are all around us, even to shatter the fabric of space itself. In this way, I have created storms."

According to the Emperor, through a simple act of *will* he is able to generate energy storms, vastly destructive, virtually unstoppable. "Force Storms," he calls them.

What he also admits in his *Book of Anger*, is that he is not able to completely control such phenomena, once he has triggered their onset. However, in the years since he wrote those words, the Emperor has continued to perfect his dark side abilities, and he now boasts to Luke that he has perfect control of his Force Storms!

Whether such boasts are true or not (they are not), one thing becomes abundantly clear from the Emperor's confrontation with Luke and Leia: these explosions of chaotic fury are no match for the greatest power in the galaxy!

A Jedi's lightsaber is a wonderful weapon, and in the hands of a fully-trained Jedi Knight, it is even a match for the technology of modern warfare. Using only a lightsaber, Luke Skywalker was able to deflect the cannonfire of an AT-AT Imperial walker back on itself, disabling the walker.

But as they grew older, and wiser, the greatest Jedi -- beings like Master Yoda -- seldom, if ever, were known to use the lightsaber. Many a young Jedi has asked his Master about this. And the old Masters were quick to respond: Because a Jedi's strength -- all his strength -- flows from the Force. And the more a Jedi learns to use the Force, the more he joins himself to that luminosity that is the very nature and substance of the Force.

Gently, persistently, Master Yoda tried to move Luke through the rigors of physical combat to the higher levels of Jedi training. But Luke, impetuous, willful, full of youthful hunger for action, seemed to never hear what Yoda tried to tell him.

He has paid a great price for his heedlessness. But from the consequences of experience, he has also learned a great lesson.

Here at last, at the terrible moment when he and Leia confront the untrammelled power of the most sinister agent of the dark side, Luke is compelled to find and take hold of those resources that were known by Master Yoda... and by the greatest Jedi of old.

The key to Luke's turning is the moment when he and Leia realize the Emperor is no longer defined by his physical form, but has become a chaotic nexus of dark energies that swell and burst open the fabric of space, tearing apart everything in the vicinity, human and machine.

Nothing can match such dark power... nothing except these twin Jedi joined in birth and now joined to the greatest strength of the Jedi -- the power of luminous beings.

For one long extended moment, Luke and Leia are united to the Force in all its intensity, and the Force flows through them like a tidal wave of light.

This is the unquenchable light of the Jedi, the ultimate reality on which their way is founded. This is the principle from which the Jedi derived their very existence and went on to become the maintainers of peace and justice during the time of the Old Republic.

Before such clarity and power, the cataclysmic rage of the Emperor cannot

The Limitations of the Dark Side Are Known

The dark side power has always been exploited by the infinitely murderous, infinitely grasping few, to the detriment of many. Seduced by violence, each Dark Side magician is convinced that to curse, to annihilate, and to unleash unspeakable energies of physical destruction is the supreme gift of the Force.

But in fact, as the greatest Jedi Masters have known, such powers are a kind of chimera, because they, can only threaten "this crude flesh." Yes, such powers can inspire fear and obedience in the weak and the weak-minded. But such powers cannot touch the brightness that surrounds us and binds us together... the brightness, to which the Jedi, as luminous beings, are forever joined.

Luke often wondered what happened to Ben and Yoda, when they passed out of this universe and their physical bodies simply vanished, leaving only heaps of empty robes behind.

How could such a marvel be?

Now, as the flood gates of the Force open in him, Luke begins to understand how such things are possible. The Force itself, beyond the physical outlines of the body, is not only a Jedi's greatest ally, but his unshakable luminous reality.

And the Force, in all its intensity, belongs to no single entity -- but to all.

One Jedi Cannot Conquer The Dark Side Alone

"I made a big mistake... I thought I had to save the galaxy all by myself. But the Way of the Jedi is not a solitary path. Many have died defending the Truth... many are together in this, great war!" -- Luke Skywalker

During his time as the Emperor's apprentice, Luke learned many things about the dark side of the Force -- things his father knew, things Luke is not yet ready to discuss, even with Leia.

But the greatest lesson he learned was not written in the teachings of the Emperor:

The evil works of the Empire, will never be undone until the fire of the Jedi Knights is rekindled throughout the galaxy!

Where to begin?

There are two Jedi: himself and Leia. And there are Han and Leia's children, all potential Jedi. Leia herself has said that her children will become Jedi. And Luke will train them. She *knows*.

But two of them, the twins Jacen & Jaina, are still babies. The third is yet unborn.

Does Luke Skywalker have to wait twenty years or more, for a time when Leia's children are fully grown, before beginning his next great task? He doubts that he can afford to wait so long.

Luke knows that the Emperor has every chance of repeating the feat he achieved after the Battle of Endor. If even one clone vat survives in the laboratories on Byss, the Emperor may even now be making good his threat to live forever.

If that is the case (and nobody knows it is not), Palpatine already has put into action a master plan for retaking the galaxy. Thanks to Luke and Artoo, the Alliance has learned that the Emperor intends to launch his Imperial Forces, from his fortress worlds in the Deep Core, in a deadly series of wave assaults, retaking system after system, until the entire galaxy cries out in surrender!

Even if Palpatine himself does not survive, perhaps someone *else* -- another dark side adept, for instance, or one of the Emperor's most trusted Commanders -- can proceed with the battle plan as if nothing has changed!

(And isn't there also a danger to Leia's children? Didn't the Emperor swear, in Luke's presence, to take possession of Leia's third child!)

The Jedi Knights Must Rise Again

Obi-Wan Kenobi, Master Yoda even Luke and Leia's father Anakin Skywalker have all disappeared, gone from the galaxy. Mysteriously, for reasons known only to themselves, they no longer appear to Luke, or offer him their guidance.

And yet... there's a feeling... a sense of hidden nearness... as if they are watching him, sometimes frowning, sometimes nodding their heads. Others too -- untold thousands of departed Jedi -- are with them.

Luke feels a unity among the Jedi, reaching beyond "this crude flesh," stretching back 25,000 years and more, to the beginning of the Jedi Knights. It is as if the attention of the departed Jedi can never be fully turned away from the galaxy, until the great crimes of the Empire are finally undone.

No, Luke Skywalker is not alone, not by a long shot. And he is not without resources: after all, he and Leia have recovered the Jedi Holocron. The Holocron, a long-lost Jedi wisdom source, contains a trove of histories, teachings... and Jedi secrets.

Didn't Ben tell him that if the Holocron could be found, it would help re-establish the Jedi Knights? Could it be possible that the Holocron will lead Luke and Leia to other Jedi?

In the years since the Battle of Endor it has become amply clear to Luke and Leia that the Emperor and Vader did not succeed in entirely eradicating the Jedi. A few survived. Remnants escaped detection. Vima Da Boda for instance. And the mad Jedi Jorus C'Baoth.

Luke and Leia escaped detection because they were the offspring of Jedi, hidden from the prying eyes of the Emperor. Could other children of Jedi exist? If so, is the Force strong in them? Do they only need the hand of a Jedi Master to uncover their potential?

Luke remembers that Leia once underwent a mind probe at the hands of Darth Vader was a terrible and exhausting experience, but her latent Jedi abilities remained undetected by her own father.

Surely then there must be others...

As Luke contemplates the future, he is filled with a burst of optimism and fresh hope. He is also filled with a sense of urgency. Although a great battle has been won, there is no time for celebration.

When the enemy is down, but not finished, that is the moment to press the advantage. That is the moment to move rapidly to retake everything that has been lost.

"This is the beginning, Leia... you, your children, the Holocron ... I feel it, great things are coming. The Jedi Knights will rise again."

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